

PERMANENT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA
REPRESENTING MTA RIDERS SINCE 1981

**2010 Annual Performance Review
of
The MTA and Its Operating Agencies**

Introduction

The 2010 Annual Performance Review marks the fourth report by PCAC which evaluates the yearly initiatives and accomplishments of the MTA and its operating agencies. As in the past, we address the broad themes that affect the ability of the MTA to deliver quality service to the riders that we represent: leadership, transparency, accountability, service performance, communication, community outreach, security, capital program management, etc. An important guide in this review process is previous years' assessments in order to gauge the progress made in policies and practices.

Last year the MTA was fortunate to have sustained and capable leadership at Headquarters and the Agencies. However, the organization faced extreme financial pressures that required not only a fare hike but painful service cuts. Chairman and CEO Jay Walder has committed the MTA to "Making Every Dollar Count" and finding efficiencies within the system that will enable the MTA to overcome deficits without additional outside funding. The PCAC will be looking for performance measures and more accountability to accompany this slogan.

Despite the gloomy financial environment, the MTA and the Agencies did make strides in a number of areas: an improved website; technology applications to operations and communication; streamlining the MTA Board Committee structure; progress in the long stalled installation of CCTV cameras in subways and countdown clocks; much greater transparency as a result of the capital program and performance dashboards on the website; and continued support of transit-oriented development projects. The year saw the Mega projects and other capital projects move forward, but the Capital Program could be in serious jeopardy if funding is not provided to complete the current five-year plan.

At the end of 2010, the MTA appeared to be walking a very fine line, taking careful steps in order to keep moving ahead while avoiding a financial crisis. A detailed commentary on Headquarters, Capital Construction Company, and each of the operating agencies follows.

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Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTAHQ)

Leadership

- In the first full year as Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board, Jay Walder has capably led the MTA through the trials of severe budget constraints marked by fare increases and service cuts. His commitment to “making every dollar count” helped stem the deficit, but came at the cost of staffing level and service reductions.

Despite the money issues (or because of them), Mr. Walder has brought increased attention to efficiency improvements with an emphasis on technology applications. Still, the image of the MTA took a beating in 2010, particularly through the agonizing fare increase and service reduction process. The backlash from the implementation of the State payroll tax did not improve the situation. The MTA needs to put a greater effort into communicating its accomplishments and making its case to Federal administrators, Washington and Albany legislators, local elected officials, and the public. The enormous economic, environmental and societal value of this remarkable transit system needs to be better documented and promoted with a louder voice.

The PCAC was pleased when newly elected Governor Cuomo chose to retain Mr. Walder in 2011. The need for continuity in leadership is paramount at this juncture in the MTA’s evolution. However, in addition to Mr. Walder’s “Making Every Dollar Count” mission, the PCAC would like to see the effort married to an enhanced and updated *performance measure* and *accountability* effort, with an emphasis on getting riders to their destinations on time.

Organization

- For several years the PCAC has been calling for a review of the staffing levels across all agencies, including Headquarters. The MTA did, in fact, as part of the efficiency reform effort, engage the consulting firm Accenture, to examine the organization for the purpose of uncovering potential efficiencies, including changes in staffing. Unfortunately, no report on the findings of this effort was ever released. Yet, efforts by PCAC, the press and other advocates yielded no evidence of any

concrete deliverable having been produced. This lack of transparency (or the appearance thereof) continues to raise doubts about the structural quality and effectiveness at Headquarters.

- PCAC is encouraged by the effort to induce the commuter railroads to work together more closely through the creation of a joint commuter railroad MTA Board Committee. Standardization of performance measures in the Board Committee Agenda book was an important and welcome move toward aligning the two agencies.
- Another improvement in committee structure was the dispersion of Capital Construction and Real Estate reports into the individual operating committee meetings. Now, projects specific to the particular operating agency can be dealt with in more detail by the Board Committees most directly affected.

Security

- **Closed Circuit TV (CCTV)**

After much delay there has finally been movement in the stalled interagency integrated security program. The Lockheed Martin contract has been terminated; and agency personnel have used outside contractors and in-house forces to complete the installation of security hardware at numerous monitored locations and at command centers. Working with the NYPD, contractors have been hired to install CCTV cameras for passenger identification and tunnel intrusion prevention. PCAC is pleased with this progress. The program may not be as technologically advanced as what was originally anticipated, but security system readiness is moving forward.

- **Security at Hubs**

We continue to be concerned about the level of security at Penn Station. While the MTA officials assure riders that plans and coordination between public safety agencies do exist, riders' experience at key stations during major delays and other incidents brings into question the readiness of authorities to deal with a substantial security issue that requires coordination between various transportation and public safety agencies.

Communication

- **Information Accessibility**

The MTA website introduced in 2010 was a welcome improvement over its predecessor. There is now an abundance of information (e.g. Committee books, performance measures) readily available to the public. It is important to remember that emergencies, no matter what agency is affected, need to be covered on the MTA's homepage to better disseminate important messages; and, it must be insured

that the website will not be overwhelmed in the case of severe emergencies, such as the shutdowns in the January and December heavy snow conditions.

- **Lobbying Efforts**

PCAC has long called for a dedicated Washington lobbyist who is not saddled with other administrative duties at Headquarters. The creation of a separate Director of Federal Relations is welcomed; PCAC looks forward to an active presence at the Federal level in 2011 .

In Albany, progress in 2010 was difficult at best due to a dysfunctional legislature and its impasse with Governor Paterson. The MTA's presence in Albany requires respect for legislators' local concerns while persuasively presenting the case for MTA. The current operating agency Presidents are excellent voices for communicating the complexities and needs of the system and should be familiar faces to our elected officials in Albany.

Accountability

- **Office of Legislative and Community Input**

PCAC was pleased to see that this office has been releasing reports every six months since the legislation that created it was passed in 2009. We continue to maintain that it would be helpful to categorize or code inquiries and comments listed so that the nature of the dialogues can be better summarized; and that public notification is made with the release of each report.

- **Annual Report**

The Annual Report has been deconstructed and become a series of reports in the Compliance section on the Accountability/Transparency webpage — and it is not particularly easy to find. If an internet search is made for the MTA 2010 Annual Report, all that comes up is the MTA Annual Report Narrative. There is no reference on the Narrative report as to where the reader can find the related financial reports. A better effort should be made to tie these two components together. A return to the traditional single report would be welcomed.

- **§1269-d Strategic Operating Plan**

The MTA is required to submit a “strategic operation plan” under Title 11, §1269-d, New York State Public Authorities Law. This plan requires a presentation of a five-year strategic plan to include: long-range goals and objectives for the operation of services and facilities; planned service and performance standards in detail for each year; estimated operating and capital costs to satisfy planned standards of performance and service; strategies to improve productivity and control cost growth; and analysis of the relationship between capital investments and service standards.

§1269-d also requires annual updates to the plan to include the extent to which planned service and performance standards were achieved; and indicate corrective measures that would be taken if they are not.

On the MTA Compliance website there is a report entitled “Supplementary Information for §1269-d 2011–2015”. Ostensibly this document is the annual update noted above. However, PCAC believes this document is lacking. There is no explanation about the need for the Supplement. There is no Table of Contents. The goals and explanations of variances are very general and do not reach the detail required in statute. Customer satisfaction is measured in many ways, not just On-Time Performance (OTP), Wait Assessment (WA) and Mean Distance Between Failures (MDBF). Other measures, such as the standee reports or responses from the Passenger Environment Survey (PES), are not recognized in the report.

The discussion of the capital program information does not provide a link to the Capital Program Executive Summary or the full Capital Program Plan. However, the Capital Program Plan itself fails to identify detailed operational benefits of capital investments beyond the above mentioned metrics. Reduction in canceled trains, major delays, platform and train standees, and improvements in train speeds, etc., (by lines, and stations), along with passenger based metrics, should be used to evaluate capital plan projects.

It is regrettable that the “MTA Plan” (also known as the Strategic Business Plan), which used to accompany the Annual Report, is no longer produced. That report laid out the plans for the five-year period in terms of business initiatives, agency budgets and a financial plan. It was a clear picture of where the MTA wanted to go. The MTA needs to return to producing a single strategic plan which better meets the requirements of §1269-d. In an effort to comply with various reporting requirements it appears that the MTA has no plan. We recommend a single document that fulfills statutory reporting requirements and provides a clear picture of the way forward.

- **Capital Program Dashboard**

The capital program dashboard was unveiled in August, 2010. The public is able to search the Dashboard for specific projects and follow the progression from inception to completion. This information is available for every project in the 2010–2014 Capital Program and selected projects still underway in the 2005–2009 program. The site link on the MTA homepage makes the Dashboard easy to access. This is the first time that there will be the ability to track how well each completed project did with regard to being on-time and on budget. Comments on these successes and failures will be found under the headings for each of the operating agencies.

- **Performance Dashboard**

The MTA has created a dashboard for performance indicators across all agencies. As a supplement to this information, LIRR and MNR are now providing delayed and canceled train information in searchable databases on the website. The PCAC recognizes the greater transparency; but continues to call for the posting of the number of estimated passengers on each delayed or canceled train. The PCAC would also like to see NYCT make its performance databases searchable and available to software application developers.

- **Independent Engineering Consultant (IEC)**

PCAC is greatly concerned about the lack of input by the most recently appointed independent engineering consultant (IEC). The Capital Construction Company writes its reports to the Board and the IEC provides commentary (an arrangement recommended by the MTA Inspector General (IG)). PCAC finds these IEC remarks perfunctory, with little detail and substance. This raises serious concerns about the integrity of the review process. PCAC believes that a higher level of involvement by the IEC is necessary, providing standalone, in-depth narratives on a variety of topics concerning capital investments.

Public Hearing Venues

PCAC continues to be concerned that some required public hearings held by the MTA cannot be conveniently reached by riders using public transportation. This is primarily an issue in the outlying portion of the Metro-North service area and Nassau and Suffolk counties. MTA officials should renew their efforts to locate suitable public hearing venues at central points that are adequately served by public transportation.

Agency-wide Initiatives

- **Shared Services**

As 2010 came to a close, the Business Service Center (BSC) was about to become a reality. PCAC has always supported this initiative and will be looking for progress reports on cost savings.

- **Sustainability**

MTA's continued effort to be "greener" is commendable. Of note is the use of solar roof panels to heat water at NYCT's Coney Island Overhaul Shop and Maintenance Facility and the ground breaking for the "green" LIRR train wash facility in Babylon. The importance of transit in the New York Metropolitan area was highlighted when the Climate Registry credited the MTA with preventing the emission of 17.4 million metric tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. In 2011, PCAC will be looking for a status report on MTA's efforts to achieve the goals set forth in the Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustainability's final report (2009), *Greening Mass Transit & Metro Regions*.

- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)**

Unfortunately, the poor economy and lack of housing demand have slowed some TOD initiatives across the region. Still, the MTA and its railroads have been active in predevelopment efforts to assist municipalities in securing federal and state funding to support communities seeking smart growth development around their stations. The PCAC acknowledges these efforts and urges the MTA to continue these admirable initiatives.

In 2010, MTA's TOD staff in coordination with MNR, LIRR and NYCT helped to advance several initiatives to encourage the building of new development near transit and to ensure that future land use planning throughout the region emphasizes the benefits of compact, mixed-use development within walking distance of MTA's existing transit stations. The MTA TOD staff continued to act as a "project champion," consulting with municipalities and stakeholders to identify and pursue TOD projects and providing development, planning, and real estate expertise.

- a) New York City: Specific projects in 2010 included the approval by the City of New York of a zoning bonus for a proposed office development at 7th Avenue and 33rd Street in exchange for a \$100 million transit improvement that will reopen the Gimbels passageway connecting the 6th Avenue subway to 7th Avenue and Penn Station and additional stairs, escalators and platform widening. These privately financed and maintained improvements will be constructed simultaneously with a new office tower on the site of the current Pennsylvania Hotel. The NYCTRC testified in support of this initiative.

The region's largest TOD, the development of Manhattan's Hudson Yards in conjunction with the extension of the 7 train, reached a milestone in 2010 with the execution of a contract of sale for the MTA West Side Yard air rights to the Related Companies, the designated developer, for the 10 million square foot mixed-use development.

- b) LIRR: MTA TOD staff worked with the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation in facilitating the Station Plaza project around the LIRR's Jamaica Station near the AirTrain to JFK Airport. The project is intended to increase intermodal transfers between subway, buses, LIRR and the AirTrain Station with the ultimate goal of facilitating development around the LIRR station. MTA TOD staff also assisted the Flushing Willets Point Corona local development corporation in its Brownfield Opportunity Area grant from NYS Department of State to develop a master plan to rezone the industrial waterfront of the Flushing River.
- c) MNR: As we have said in previous reports, the MNR staff should be commended for its sustained effort in promoting TOD:
 - 1) Harrison Station — After an extensive collaborative process with Town/Village of Harrison and the completion of predevelopment /technical studies, MNR and Harrison are currently finalizing an RFP, to be issued jointly later this year for a

TOD. MNR helped to secure a NYS Department of State (DOS) Smart Growth grant to fund the needed design guidelines and revisions to the draft TOD zoning necessary for the RFP.

- 2) Poughkeepsie Station — MNR helped to secure a NYS DOS Smart Growth grant to fund an economic/market study of the potential feasibility for TOD around Poughkeepsie stations (currently underway). MNR has been awarded a Federal Highway Administration TCSP grant to undertake a TOD concept plan for the area around Poughkeepsie Station as a follow up to the market study. MNR has issued an RFP and is currently in the consultant selection process.
 - 3) Mount Vernon East Station — The City of Mount Vernon also secured a NYS DOS Smart Growth grant to fund an economic/market study with the help of MNR. This study is underway and addresses the potential feasibility for TOD around the Mount Vernon Station area.
 - 4) Beacon Station — Significant work has gone into the Beacon Station; however, progress is on hold until there is community/city concurrence on needed zoning.
 - 5) I-287/Tappan Zee Project — MNR has supported TOD corridor planning as part of the NYSDOT/MNR led I=287/Tappan Zee Project.
- **Technology: Smart Card, ATS, Countdown Clocks and Bus Time**

The MTA is finally coming into the 21st Century in terms of technology. Contactless fare payment implementation has been significantly advanced beyond two previous pilot studies. Installation of the Automatic Train Supervision (ATS) system is almost complete on the subway's A Division, enabling the operation of "Countdown Clocks" and a more accurate Wait Assessment measurement. Innovative approaches using the signal system are being investigated to provide the same amenity on the B Division and 7 lines. Pilots for real time bus location were introduced on the M16 and M34 routes (where GPS has been used to provide location information). The PCAC looks forward to the expansion and further application of technology to many facets of MTA services.
 - **Information Technology Leadership**

We have long called for more support and pursuit of technology applications to operations and administration. It is encouraging that upper level management is now making Information Technology a priority.

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Capital Construction Company (CCC)

Reorganization

- In the MTA Board Committee reorganization, the reports of the CCC were dispersed to the various agency committees. We chose to follow this lead and our comments on East Side Access, the 7 Line Extension, the Fulton Street Transit Center and the Second Avenue Subway are addressed in the LIRR and NYCT sections. The CCC works closely with the operating agencies and the lines of responsibility intertwine as these projects unfold.

Transparency

- Over the past year the Capital Construction Company (CCC) has improved its communication and image with the public. There have been several meetings with PCAC staff where informative presentations were given on the various projects. There has also been much improved coverage of the projects added to the website: project goals descriptions, status of construction, presentations, pictures, etc. However, the individual websites should be standardized in format so that the elements of information could be located more easily.

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Long Island Rail Road (LIRR)

Leadership

- **Cooperation**

Over the past year President Helena Williams adeptly handled challenging issues facing the railroad. At the same time she has been extremely accessible and responsive to rider concerns. Meetings that the LIRRCC has requested have been promptly scheduled and, because of that, the Council is better informed and the ideas presented by our members have advanced.

- **Fare Collection**

An ongoing issue among riders is a pattern of lapses in the collection of tickets on trains. While the Council has brought this shortcoming to the attention of LIRR and MTA management on numerous occasions, the problems continue. Regrettably, as part of the fare increases that took place during 2010, the LIRR reduced a ticket's period of validity to as little as 14 days. This action, which is definitely not customer-friendly and has raised the ire of riders, can only be interpreted as an effort to mitigate the impact of train personnel's failure to collect tickets. The LIRRCC has called for a comprehensive audit to determine the actual amount of revenue lost to uncollected fares.

- **Meet the Managers Program**

The Council was pleased to learn of LIRR's commitment to begin a series of "Meet the Managers" events in early 2011 in order to better communicate with riders. This initiative evolved from a suggestion made by the Council to LIRR management.

Service Reductions and New Service

- **Suffolk County Service**

The LIRRCC is concerned with a pattern that suggests reduced interest in providing service to Suffolk County in diesel territory. The service cuts of 2010 featured dramatic cutbacks to Greenport branch service. Restoration of service to diesel territory after the December snowstorm was slow and there appears to have been a real lack of effort to get service to Montauk up and running. The Rail Road has

responded that this branch has relatively low ridership and that there was a need to use the diesel engines in more heavily traveled areas. However, East End riders should not have to suffer days of service outages.

On a positive note, the Rail Road revised schedules to provide service that brings Suffolk County Court jurors to Riverhead before their 9 AM reporting time every day that courts are in session and returns them back home again in the afternoon.

- **Service Cutbacks**

In addition to the service cuts noted above, in 2010 LIRR riders endured the end of weekend service on the West Hempstead branch, the discontinuation of overnight service to Brooklyn, and the elimination of half-hourly service on the Port Washington line. Many of these cuts have been made despite substantial population and strong ridership and while the basic structure of service still exists, these cuts do real damage to the system. These were not reductions made as a result of declining ridership. There is a purpose and demand for each of the services that were eliminated. Sadly, these cutbacks, with a value of only \$7.6 million in direct savings, did little to resolve the MTA's financial crisis.

Service Performance

- **OTP**

The year 2010 was a difficult year for the Rail Road in terms of OTP: 92.8% of LIRR trains were considered on-time in 2010, significantly lower than the 95.2% achieved in 2009. These numbers do not reflect the true commuter experience because they include off-peak travel and trains on branches with low frequency and relatively few riders.

The AM peak OTP for 2010 was recorded as 91.2%, and the PM peak was 89.3%, significantly below the overall OTP for the system as a whole. Furthermore, in the PM peak, seven branches (Babylon, Ronkonkoma, Port Washington, Huntington/Hicksville, Port Jefferson, Montauk and Oyster Bay) had OTP levels below 89.3%; yet they carry nearly 80% of the ridership.

In sum, the LIRR still struggles with performance, particularly in the peak hours. The Council recognizes that there are systemic bottlenecks that will require major capital investment to mitigate. For this reason it is extremely important that the public and elected officials be kept aware of this connection between better service performance and needed capital improvements.

- **Canceled Trains**

The failure to incorporate the effect of canceled or terminated trains into the railroad's "average delay per late train" metric means that this indicator is not truly reflective of the passengers' experience. Canceled or terminated trains are counted as late trains, but no delay factor is attributed to these trains. For the rider, a

canceled or terminated train means an added delay waiting for the next available train or rescue bus. The LIRR reports 2,051 trains were terminated or canceled for 2010. This is .9% of scheduled trips and it represents an 80% increase above the 2009 level of .5%. The Rail Road placed daily late and canceled train information, including duration and reason for the delay, on the MTA website in a searchable database which has been a very useful tool to monitor service reliability. We have requested that the estimated number of riders affected by canceled trains be published in the database as well.

- **2010 Mega Delays¹**

The frequency of mega delays, 50 or more trains delayed or canceled, was a serious concern for the LIRRCC. In all, there were 27 such incidents. The most severe incidents occurred in August with the Hall Tower fire, which severely impacted the system for nine days. Multiple weather events caused eight of the major delays and Amtrak breakdowns in Penn Station caused five incidents, each resulting in 55 to 80 LIRR trains to be delayed or canceled. The snow emergency in January 2010, which stranded passengers for many hours, prompted the Rail Road to institute a new snow policy that shut down operations when snowfall reached 13". This was a significant effort toward the reduction of mega delays.

- **Standee Report**

In 2010 the LIRR began publishing a monthly standee report which the Council had requested. The current standee report is calculated to reflect the number of people who will be required to stand on a train due to the *lack of a full complement of cars* on a given day. The report is not intended to reflect the total number of standees on board trains each month. It is a concern to see that the LIRR now programs standees on the Huntington and Long Beach branches each month; and further, the actual number of standees typically exceeds those expectations.

In 2011 the Council looks to the LIRR to identify a metric that reflects not only the impact of short trains noted above, but also the number of standees that occur from *canceled and terminated trains*. When a train is canceled and its riders move to other trains, crush loads are produced that are currently not reflected in standee statistic. These are numbers that need to be measured now and compared later against the capacity and reliability added by East Side Access and other investments in the system. It is most important to determine these projects' true value to the riders.²

We also believe that a better understanding of customers' patterns of usage of the Rail Road is needed. Current statistics reflect the number of rides instead of the number of riders and their characteristics. Knowledge of the dynamics of ridership, including breakdowns of two-way trip riders and single direction trip riders, is needed.

¹ This is a PCAC definition; this metric is not currently reported by either commuter railroad.

² A similar request has been made to MNR.

- **Diesel Fleet Mean Distance Between Failures (MDBF)**

The poor performance of the diesel fleet continues. The Dual Mode (DM) equipment's MDBF rolling 12-month average in December 2010, at 17,085 miles, is up from 15,723 miles in 2009; however, this level is still below the goal of 18,000 miles. The Diesel Electric (DE) equipment, at 15,884 miles in 2010, is significantly below 2009's 18,329 MDBF and the 2010 goal of 18,000 miles. The MDBF goal for the diesel fleet was originally 50,000 miles, then reduced to 30,000 miles and is now set at 18,000 miles. Worse, there is little expectation that there will be any significant improvement in performance. Efforts by the Rail Road to address the engineering flaws have shown limited success and the Council continues to find this a distressing situation.

Capital Projects

- **East Side Access (ESA)**

This project is critical to addressing some of the capacity issues the LIRR faces on a daily basis. The work underway on the Queens side of the project will improve LIRR flexibility and thus, reliability, long before the completion of the entire project. Already the new track switches, part of ESA readiness, enabled the LIRR to maneuver trains around a disabled Amtrak train in the Harold Interlocking area.

- **Opening of Atlantic Terminal**

The completion of the new Atlantic Terminal in Brooklyn is a significant improvement for the 25,000 LIRR riders that use it each day to transfer for connections with nine subway lines. The new space is open and inviting, formed by a three-story limestone, granite and glass structure with a soaring atrium. This station is a notable achievement. Unfortunately, access to this terminal in overnight hours was restricted from the start, and the discontinuation of late night service limits the use of the terminal to something less than its full potential.

- **Atlantic Avenue Viaduct Phase 2A**

The Atlantic Avenue viaduct is a critical component of the LIRR infrastructure. The Council is pleased that this phase completes the replacement of 102 spans (the next phase will complete the remaining 17 spans).

- **Station Rehabilitations**

The LIRRCC was pleased to see the completion of the Brentwood and Central Islip projects. The stations now reflect a more positive image as gateways to the LIRR and the respective towns.

- **Investments to Improve Reliability**

The Council would like to acknowledge other investments that were completed in 2010 to improve the reliability of the system; below we note the most significant of those investments:

- a) Installation of Jay, Hall and Dunton Micro-processors: In 2010 the LIRR replaced its relay-based signal system at these three interlockings with a microprocessor signal system. This \$42.3 million project allows the LIRR to control its train traffic from its new centralized Rail Control Center in Jamaica. The Rail Road should identify the annual number of breakdowns that occurred at these three interlockings prior to the changeover and the number of delayed trains that were associated with each breakdown as a means of tracking the value of this investment.
- b) Replacement of Substations: This \$37 million investment funded the replacement of the substation buildings at Inwood, Hempstead and Floral Park. As power failures contribute to delays on the LIRR, the LIRR should compare the frequency of substation failures in recent years; and should determine the magnitude of train delays that occurred with each failure, to better track the value of the new investment going forward.
- c) Mineola Track Maintenance and Drainage Improvements: Track flooding from heavy rain has been an ongoing problem in Mineola. The Council strongly supports drainage improvements in this area and is pleased to see they were completed in the 4th Quarter of 2010.

Stations and Right of Way

- **Station Maintenance**

Station Maintenance remains a major concern of the Council, as resource constraints make the difficult choices between competing needs necessary. The condition of stations generally does not directly impact operations, but the stations are the image of the LIRR and the communities that they serve. Improvement in station maintenance remains a work in progress, but the Rail Road has been responsive to Council concerns in this area.

- **Station Hours**

The structure of ridership on the LIRR is changing, with an increase in trips off-peak. We had hoped that in 2010 the Rail Road would implement a pilot program to extend the hours of several stations that serve off-hour riders and had discussed this possibility with Rail Road staff. This initiative did not come to pass, but the Council continues to urge the LIRR to implement such a program. We have also frequently suggested examining the installation of vendors in stations in appropriate locations as a way to keep the stations open longer, a solution that other commuter railroads utilize.

- **Right-of-Way (ROW) Clean-up**

The LIRRCC was pleased with the clean-up efforts in connection with the Jamaica Signal Modernization project and a clean-up of the Port Washington station area that was undertaken in response to requests from the LIRRCC. The Council, however, remains dissatisfied with the general condition of the ROWs and the debris found on them. Again, we recognize that tight resources impact clean-up. We applaud the Rail Road's commitment to include right of way cleanup within the scope of maintenance and improvement projects, but these efforts address a small fraction of the problem. While isolated battles may be won, it is our judgment that the overall war to clean up the LIRR's right of way is being lost. The Council would like to see an audit of ROW conditions, a schedule for clean-up across the system and a budget for addressing this issue.

Communication

- **CooCoo Partnership**

The LIRR's partnership with CooCoo, which allows riders to obtain schedule and fare information through the use of text messages, has been very helpful to riders. The success of this program at the LIRR resulted in its adoption at Metro-North Railroad in 2011 as well. This program is an excellent example of the use of outside resources to better inform riders at minimal cost to the LIRR and MTA.

- **Jamaica Signal and Switch System Modernization Project**

The LIRR did an excellent job informing riders about the project and its impacts on travel.

- **Emergency Response**

The LIRR Management has greatly improved in planning for anticipated stresses, such as the Jamaica signal and switch system modernization project. However, in crisis conditions and situations demanding an emergency response, there is often a lack of critical decision making and situation management. Penn Station shutdowns were plagued with an appearance of chaos and continually marked by poor communication and coordination in 2010; and, while lessons were learned from the 2009 snow emergency that left riders stranded on a train for many hours, the December 2010 blizzard response revealed gaps in the LIRR's emergency response planning. The coordination of real-time communication to the riders needs the attention of Rail Road leadership.

- **Short Car Messaging**

Thanks to a suggestion by the Council, the electronic arrival boards (also known as AVPS) at stations now indicate if an expected train is short a car(s) in its consist. Thus, passengers can adjust their waiting locations on the platform and not be left scrambling to board the train.

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)

- **ADA Advisory Committee**

In 2008 the PCAC was told by Rail Road management that an ADA Advisory Committee was an excellent idea and that regularly scheduled meetings would occur. It is disappointing that two years have passed since the first and only meeting of this committee took place. While promises have been made frequently since then, no date for a second meeting has been set.

- **Pinelawn Station**

Pinelawn Station is technically ADA accessible (there is wheelchair access to the platforms). The station building, however, is not open and the area under the roof overhang is not accessible. Therefore, in the case of inclement weather persons in wheelchairs are forced to endure the elements totally unprotected. As Pinelawn Station provides access to the Pinelawn Cemetery and the Long Island National Cemetery, site of over 300,000 veteran internments, visitors in wheelchairs are highly probable; the LIRR needs to add adequate shelter on the platforms to accommodate them.

Community Outreach

- **Graffiti Removal Initiative**

In 2010 the LIRR partnered with NYC Community Cleanup to remove graffiti from 11 railroad sites in the Jamaica area. This innovative partnership used nonviolent offenders to paint LIRR bridge areas that had been scarred with graffiti. We believe that this is a promising initial step in addressing the appearance of LIRR facilities.

- **Customer Satisfaction Survey**

The revision of the LIRR Customer Satisfaction Survey, through a joint effort with the MNR and the MTA, addressed the concerns about interpretation of results that the Council had raised. We believe that the methodology of the survey as presently constituted is sound.

- **Station Parking Facilities**

While station parking facilities are often operated by local government, riders frequently believe that they are the responsibility of the LIRR and judge the Rail Road accordingly. The LIRRCC believes that the LIRR should engage with local authorities on riders' issues connected to station parking. These include: perceived unfair concentrated enforcement of vehicle registration and inspection stickers in parking lots, the clearing of snow from station lots, and unfair ticketing for parking violations where there is no threat to safety or property and weather conditions make it impossible to use parking facilities as designed.

Parking continues to be a major issue throughout the LIRR system and a major determinant of riders' commuting patterns. Despite a downturn in ridership connected to the economy, many parking lots remain at capacity. With economic recovery, these issues will only increase. The LIRR must continue to work with local officials to identify potential parking facilities that can serve riders and to develop creative parking solutions.

Safety and Security

- **Gap Hazards**

The "Watch the Gap" campaign continues to be well received and effective, and the Council has been pleased to see the results of the LIRR's capital investment in extending the threshold plates on the M7 cars by two inches to reduce the gap between the car and the platform. Customer accidents have declined by approximately 10% in the past year, and the Rail Road is to be commended for this positive trend. Despite the decline in gap related incidents, dangerous platform gaps still exist and the Rail Road should ensure that riders remain vigilant about these hazards.

- **Customer Slip, Trip, and Fall Injuries**

The LIRR's efforts to reduce weather related customer injuries have been successful. The Rail Road's efforts to improve the clearing of ice and snow from platforms and other customer areas produced a 75% reduction in customer injuries stemming from slip, trips and falls on ice and snow in 2010.

- **Crossing Safety**

The LIRR's continues to make efforts to improve the safety of grade crossings. In Little Neck, four quadrant gates were installed along with roadway improvements. These changes not only make the crossing at the station safer, they also allow the Rail Road to establish a quiet zone, where trains are not required to blow horns to warn of their approach. At Stony Brook, the Rail Road noted large numbers of university students crossing the tracks, sometimes unsafely, to obtain tickets from the single Ticket Vending Machine at the station. To make crossing the tracks to obtain a ticket unnecessary, a second Ticket Vending Machine was installed so that tickets are now available on both sides of the station.

2010 Annual Performance Review of The MTA and Its Operating Agencies

Metro-North Railroad (MNR)

Leadership

- During 2010 the railroad has been fortunate to have continued experienced leadership under President Howard Permut. Further, MNR staff is always willing to share information and promptly address any MNRCC and public concerns brought to their attention.

Service Performance

- **Ridership**

Overall ridership was up 1.5% over 2009, with both commuter and discretionary trips rebounding after a 15-month decline.

- **On-Time Performance**

East of Hudson on-time performance record (OTP) for the year was 97.7%. The New Haven Line lagged somewhat at 96.8% due to its reliance on the old M2 cars that are shortly to be replaced by the new M8s. We would like to recognize the “perfect weekend” of January 9th and 10th: 757 trains on the East of Hudson lines operated with 100% OTP. In addition, the West of Hudson Port Jervis and Pascack Valley lines also turned in 100% OTP.

- **Canceled Trains**

For 2010, on East of Hudson lines, 500 trains were deemed canceled or terminated out of 209,639 trains scheduled (.2%, no change from 2009). On the West of Hudson lines 103 trains were deemed canceled or terminated out of 19,849 trains scheduled (.5%, .4% in 2009).³

³West of Hudson lines are operated by NJ TRANSIT

- **2010 Mega Delays**

MNR had few major delays in 2010. In all, there were seven incidents that caused 50 or more trains to be delayed or canceled in 2010: three due to weather conditions; one due to the fire at the 138th Street Bridge; and one each for catenary damage, pantograph and slip slide (falling leaves on tracks).

- **Service to Entertainment Venues**

MNR's substantial increase in ridership has been in part due to the game day service now provided to Yankee Stadium via the new MNR station at E. 153rd St. Fans have responded favorably to the special direct service now available on all three lines. In addition, MNR continued to provide the popular direct train service on the New Haven Line to the Meadowlands Stadium for football fans.

- **Standee Report**

MNR has been producing a standee report for many years. The format estimates the number of standees due to short car consists by comparing normal seated loads to the most recent average weekday customer counts. However, the report does not reflect the number of standees as a result of a train that is canceled or terminated enroute. The Council will continue to request that the number of estimated passengers on board trains that are canceled be included in the MNR's searchable database on the website; the number will begin to quantify the magnitude of passengers impacted from canceled trains.

- **Weather Related Preparedness and Response**

Snow was the biggest challenge to MNR in 2010, particularly the December 26th storm. During that emergency, MNR worked to keep tracks and catenary cleared and interlockings and signals operational. Still, service was disrupted, with the New Haven Line being particularly vulnerable with its old M2 cars and dependence on catenary electrification (weaknesses that proved to be a real Achilles heel in subsequent storms in early 2011). In the end, MNR went to a weekend schedule (as opposed to "limited" service) on East of Hudson lines in order to provide some service predictability for the riders.

Stations and Equipment

- **Station Work**

We were pleased to see that the station work at Philipse Manor, Scarborough and Ossining was completed in 2010 and that rehabilitation efforts continue at many more stations with scheduled completion dates in 2011. This on-going work also includes the Harmon Shop and Yard renovation.

- **Accessibility**

With station renovations at Ossining and Scarborough in 2010, these two stops are now fully ADA compliant with elevators, tactile warning strips, tactile signage and variable message signage.

- **Infrastructure**

MNR continues with its active program upgrading of signal, communications, power, track improvements, and structures across all Lines. Of particular note is the extensive tie replacement work completed on the Port Jervis line, as well as the ongoing repairs to the Moodna and Woodbury Viaducts.

- **Railcars**

The MNRCC was disappointed that the new M8 cars for the New Haven Line were not in revenue service by the end of 2010. We understand that in testing several problems were encountered that needed to be resolved. However, we commend the effort toward the revitalization of other parts of the fleet that continued to move forward. Completed in 2010 were: all Performance Improvement Program upgrades on 88 M3 cars; the upgrade of the End-Door Coaches; overhaul of 20 Genesis Dual-Mode locomotives; M2 Critical System Replacement program; the overhaul of the first two West of Hudson F-40 locomotives; and the purchase of 12 new BL-20 shuttle/switcher locomotives.

Communication

- Moving the Grand Central Terminal Customer Service office to a much more visible location in the Main Concourse will certainly be a benefit to riders. On a related note MNRCC would like to commend the Railroad for its attention to maintaining the beauty and elegance of the Terminal: vibrant retailing, cleanliness, special shows, quality of lighting, etc. The new self-guided audio tour of the Terminal is a nice offering for visitors.
- The introduction of the Metro-North Train Time™ rider alert system, providing real-time train status for smart phones and computers, was a welcomed new amenity for riders. The real time information screens, implemented at White Plains, Harlem 135th Street, Larchmont, Yankees-E. 153rd Street and Fordham stations are also a noteworthy improvement.

Station Access

- MNR continues to make substantial investments in parking facilities and station access amenities (over and underpasses, new stairways, elevators, etc.). The support for connecting services to stations is one of the Railroad's hallmarks. This outstanding program of bus service, shuttles and ferry connections to stations throughout the MNR service area serves as a model for the region.

Community Outreach

- **Customer Satisfaction Survey**

The Council was glad to see the Customer Satisfaction Survey implemented last year. This is particularly gratifying due to the incorporation of recommendations made by PCAC members concerning criteria for analysis and standardization with the LIRR.

2010 Annual Performance Review of The MTA and Its Operating Agencies

New York City Transit (NYCT)

Leadership

- President Tom Prendergast, who assumed his position in late 2009, has guided NYCT through a difficult year marked by painful service cuts and fare hikes. His accessibility and candor, evident at the annual President's Forum in October, has been praised by riders and advocates.
- Over the year there has been progress on many fronts, particularly with technology applications. During the fare and service hearings, NYCT leadership did listen to the riders and made some changes in response to their comments. Additionally, the explanatory material prepared for the hearings was very well done.

Still, there were low points. Financial pressures forced the closing of station booths before call box intercom systems and cameras could be fully installed; bus and subway route cuts were extremely painful. The Inspector General's report on the falsification of signal inspections cast a shadow over operations; however the PCAC welcomed top management's attention to the issue and focus to address it; The December snow storm left riders stranded for an excessive amount of time in difficult conditions and bus and subway service was severely compromised for days.

Organization

- **Reorganization of the Subways**

One of the first things President Prendergast did was scale back the Line Manager program, keeping its strengths while addressing its weaknesses. We support this move and his appointment of experienced individuals to key positions in Subways management.

- **Buses**

NYCTRC greatly regretted the retirement of Joseph Smith as Senior Vice-President, Buses. He brought an incredible understanding and depth of experience to running the largest system in the country. While not perfect, for the most part the NYCT bus system performs admirably. We look forward to working with new leadership in the

coming year with the common goal of continuing and improving quality bus service in New York City.

Service Performance – Subways

- **Wait Assessment**

NYCT is to be commended for redefining its leading performance indicator, Wait Assessment, to better reflect customer expectations and to ensure consistent standards between peak and off-peak periods

- **Delays**

Although the agency works diligently in the face of constrained resources to keep the system in a state of good repair, there are still many incidents where signals or other mechanicals fail. Most often, these delays affect only one line or section of a line. Sometimes, however, there are major delays that impact the whole system (snow storms, torrential rains, etc.). The NYCT does not report on the number of these major system-wide delays and what causes them. The NYCTRC would like to see more disclosure about the nature of large-scale delays in the Transit Committee Book and on the website.

Service Performance – Buses

- **Select Bus Service (SBS)**

At the end of 2010 the Select Bus Service (SBS) continued to perform well on the Bx12 in the Bronx and riders were becoming accustomed the new SBS on the M15 route. Unfortunately, the latter had a bit of a rough start — information problems, ticket machines placed too close to the curb, construction conflicts on 2nd Avenue and confusion with local bus stops. It is running smoother now and NYCTRC hopes this initiative will continue to move forward in the remaining boroughs.

- **34th Street**

The pilot program with CIS (Customer Information System) technology on the M34 and M16 routes along 34th Street continues, featuring automatic on-board stop announcements and estimated arrival times on bus shelter displays. Two dedicated bus lanes (one in each direction) were instituted but enforcement has been problematic. We look forward to new proposals for this corridor and the estimated improvement in bus speeds that would result.

Capital Projects – Mega's

- **7 Line Extension**

This project appears to be moving along on schedule and on budget. While the NYCTRC has always supported this project, the Council still considers the failure to

incorporate a station at 10th Avenue, where there is significant development, as short-sighted and a disfavor to the residents in that area.

- **Fulton Street Transit Center**

After many challenges with significant cost overruns in its early days, this mega project, designed to connect five subway stations and ten subway lines, appears to be moving along at a reasonable pace. As of this writing, the CCC reports that the project is more than 50% complete and is on track for its scheduled overall June 2014 target completion date. The Council is highly supportive of this initiative and the benefits that will be produced for riders.

- **2nd Avenue Subway**

This sorely needed project has continued to make progress in 2010. However, the impacts on the local neighborhoods and businesses have been severe. The Council feels that CCC could have done a better job and done it much earlier to help mitigate some of the hardships that have had to be endured, both by the retail establishments and the residents.

Capital Program Management

- **Other Capital Projects**

Nine projects were completed in 2010 from the 2005–2009 Capital Program. Of these, only two were completed within 10% of budget; five were more than 90% over budget. Some of these variances were due to changes in scope, but others relate to increased construction costs and delays. In terms of schedules, only two projects were essentially completed on time, while five were over a year late; the reasons range from scope expansion, to late starts, to unanticipated problems. Because of the current financial constraints at the MTA, the Council is calling for more rigorous oversight of all ongoing capital projects to increase the level of accountability.

- **96th St. and Jay Street/MetroTech**

The NYCTRC welcomed the completion of the rehabilitation of these two important stations. The Manhattan 96th Street station on the 1, 2 and 3 lines is greatly improved with the old sidewalk entrances replaced with better access at the center station house. The renovation has made the station interior quite attractive visually, but the most valuable new assets are the new ADA elevators. In Brooklyn, the merger between the former Jay Street/Borough Hall station (A, C and F lines) and the Lawrence Street/MetroTech station (R line), only two blocks apart, is an excellent achievement. The newly created connecting walkway (a free transfer) features added ADA elevators and two escalators to the R platform.

- **Rockaways, Brighton Line and the Culver Viaduct**

In December NYCT announced the reopening of the Rockaway Park-bound platforms at the Beach 105th Street-Seaside and Beach 90th Street-Holland stations. The rehabilitation of these stations is part of a \$117 million project

encompassing nine stations on the Rockaway Peninsula. On the Brighton line the Neck Road and Avenue U stations were completed and work continues on five other stations. Steady progress continues, as well, on the important Culver Viaduct rehabilitation.

- **South Ferry Station**

The Council is disappointed that the water leakage and falling wall tiles in this new station have not been adequately addressed. According to NYCT, grouting, re-grouting and other measures have been undertaken by the contractor in an effort to resolve the water condition at South Ferry Station, yet the problem persists. CCC has now turned the station over to NYCT's Stations Environment unit, along with a budget allocation for further leak remediation. We will continue to monitor the condition of this station in 2011.

- **Station Component Assessment**

The Council is highly supportive of this concept that was initiated in 2010, whereby the condition of various station components is rated in order to establish repair priority. It is, however, too early to assess how well this program is working.

- **Accessibility**

- a) Elevators and Escalators: Unfortunately, efforts to improve the reliability of elevators and escalators have not been successful. A new program, rolled out two years ago, has not solved the inherent problems with this equipment.
- b) Key Stations: In the drive to making the 100 "Key Stations" accessible by 2020, NYCT completed four more stations in 2010, bringing the total to 74 at the end of the year.

Safety and Security

- **Removal of Booth Agents**

Of all of the actions taken by NYCT and MTA in response to the financial crisis last year, the removal of the booth agents, without the infrastructure to provide timely aid to riders, was the worst. It was unconscionable to leave customers without the benefit of additional callboxes, intercoms and security cameras when the booth agents were eliminated. The NYCT needs to focus on providing more safety and security improvements in light of the lack of human presence in much of the system.

- **Times Square Station**

In our last performance report the NYCTRC called for better station management at key hubs within the transit system, particularly Times Square. Past incidents revealed that it was unclear who was in charge. After many meetings with NYCT and NYC transit police, patrols have been beefed up and there is clearly a much more vigorous enforcement presence throughout the station.

- **Emergency Gates**

The NYCTRC prepared a report in 2010 on the misuse of the emergency slam gates. In stations where there are a limited number of turnstiles, disembarking passengers often use the emergency gates to exit. Also, the Council found emergency gates allowed riders to often enter without payment when the gates were being used as an additional means of exit. The NYCT has not adequately addressed this issue.

- **Cameras in the Subway**

Working in conjunction with the New York City Police Department, the MTA announced that as of last fall it had activated 507 security cameras that are now providing live feeds to NYPD's Command Center from three key transit hubs – Grand Central Station, Penn Station, and Times Square. The MTA said that it had been able to add more than 1,400 security cameras in the past six months and now has nearly 3,700 security cameras online and operational in our subways. The NYCTRC is pleased at this progress and looks forward to continued installation of these needed security features in 2011.

Communication

- **General Order (GO) Posters**

The NYCTRC finds the new format for GO posters, which inform riders of service changes, a significant improvement. The Council appreciates the effort that Transit made to present this vital information more clearly and the opportunity to preview the signs prior to release.

- **SAID Screens**

Station Advisory Information Display (SAID) screens, which indicate service status on lines, were installed in late December in two locations — Grand Central Terminal at the entrance to the 4/5/6 Lines and at the 4th Avenue entrance to the Atlantic-Pacific Street Station complex. This is a very good idea to help riders make choices before entering the system.

- **Countdown Clocks**

NYCT is to be commended on the progress made over the past year with the installation of the Automatic Train Supervision (ATS) system on the A Division lines (1–6). This began the progress toward the long awaited “countdown clocks” that inform riders about the wait time for the next train. As of the end of the year NYCT announced that countdown clocks have been activated in 100 stations. On the B Division and the 7 line, we credit Transit staff with initiating some innovative pilots using the signal system to provide similar communication technology.

- **ADA Coordinating Compliance Committee Meetings**

Based on the Council's repeated requests, the NYCT Office of ADA Compliance is now putting the minutes from the ADA Coordinating Compliance Committee meetings on the website. In addition, again at the Council's request, responses to questions raised by meeting participants and presentations given are also posted. This action is greatly appreciated and NYCTRC thanks the Office of ADA Compliance for this action.

Customer Service

- **Complaints**

It is recognized that the volume of inquiries and complaints in a system as large as the NYCT is sizeable and certainly a challenge for the agency. However, the Council still gets comments from riders that their complaints go unanswered or that they find it difficult to negotiate the new phone options when they call. The Council believes that NYCT customer service is getting better, but that there is still room for improvement.

Community Outreach

- In general, the Council feels that NYCT does a credible job in community outreach — informing neighborhoods and riders of changes that will be necessary due to capital construction, or giving information about new service such as SBS. However, the Council was particularly distressed that the name change of the Broadway-Nassau St. station (A and C lines) to Fulton Street was done with little notice or transition for riders. It is hoped that in the future station name changes will be presented to the MTA Board and that adequate warning will be given to the public well in advance of the action.

PERMANENT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA
REPRESENTING MTA RIDERS SINCE 1981

**2010 Annual Performance Review
of
The MTA and Its Operating Agencies**

Watch List for 2011

Headquarters

- Increased emphasis on performance measures and goals for both operational performance and capital investments
- Increased evidence of accountability at the MTA and within its operating agencies
- Reinstatement of in-depth monthly critiques of MTA capital projects by the Independent Engineers
- Reinstatement of a single MTA Annual Report
- Reinstatement of the MTA's Strategic Business Plan produced with the MTA annual budget and other required reports
- Increased efforts by the Presidents of the operating agencies in communicating with Albany and at the Federal level
- Substantially improved communication during service emergencies
- Expansion in the use of technology in MTA services and administration
- Continuation of TOD initiatives
- Completion of the Status report on MTA's efforts to achieve goals set forth in *Greening Mass Transit & Metro Regions*
- Timely updates to the capital program and performance dashboards

CCC

- More uniformity among the mega project websites

LIRR

- Substantially improved security, crowd control and internal lines of communication at rail hubs during major incidents
- Significantly improved coordination of real-time communication with riders during emergencies
- Improved OTP, particularly in the PM Peak period
- Reduction in mega delays (50 or more trains delayed)
- Creation of standee metric due to canceled and partially canceled trains
- Reduction of standees
- Continued modernization efforts throughout the LIRR and progress on the East Side Access project

- A comprehensive audit of fare collection practices to determine the actual amount of revenue lost to uncollected fares
- Meeting reduced overtime goals
- Incorporating the time delay from canceled and terminated trains into the monthly “average delay per late train” metric
- Service improvements in Suffolk County
- Improved understanding of the ridership, counting not just the number of rides taken but also how many individual riders there are and the dynamics of those riders
- Improved station maintenance and right-of way clean-up
- Implementation of a pilot program to extend the hours of several stations that serve off-hour riders, particularly in cold weather conditions
- Resumption of ADA Advisory Committee meetings
- Review of parking policies and facilities owned by the local municipalities
- Re-examination of 2010 service reductions for possible restorations

MNR

- Creation of standee metric due to canceled and partially canceled trains
- Better coordination of real-time communication with riders in emergencies
- Full rollout of the new M8 cars as scheduled
- Maintaining service quality using present electric fleet until full delivery of the M8 cars
- Continued TOD initiatives
- Incorporating the time delay from canceled and terminated trains into the monthly “average delay per late train” metric
- Meeting reduced overtime goals
- Improved West of Hudson service
- A comprehensive audit of fare collection practices to determine the actual amount of revenue lost to uncollected fares

NYCT

- Resolution of the subway signal inspection issues
- Report on major subway system-wide delays and their causes in the Transit Committee Book and on the website
- Continued progress on the 7 Line extension, Fulton Street Transit Center and 2nd Avenue Subway, including better outreach to residents and merchants in the latter’s construction zone
- Increased oversight and monitoring of all ongoing capital projects
- Progress on leak remediation at the South Ferry subway station
- Improved elevator and escalator reliability in the subways
- More ADA subway key stations completed
- Implementation of cameras and intercoms through the subway to replace the eyes and ears of station booth agents

- Additional activation of countdown clocks in subways
- Adequate notice of subway station name changes
- Continued bus improvements on the 34th Street corridor
- Continued SBS implementation
- Re-examination of 2010 service reductions for possible restorations